

long-term care can quickly wipe out the assets of even those who have worked and saved for a lifetime.

For example, the average cost of nursing home care is now over \$38,000 a year. If you happen to need such care, your options are limited under the current system. Only about 2 percent of long-term care costs are handled by private insurance. Normally, everyone else pays out of pocket or is forced to Medicaid, to the degree that nearly 40 percent of Medicaid costs are swallowed by long-term care components.

This bill now includes the language that allows tax deductions for long-term care services, as is allowable for medical services. I urge the support of this amendment and the support of this bill.

#### URGING PASSAGE OF THE KASSEBAUM - KENNEDY - ROUKEMA HEALTH CARE REFORM BILL

(Mr. OLIVER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLIVER. Mr. Speaker, American families are losing their health insurance every day because of corporate downsizing. The original Kennedy-Kassebaum health insurance bill was bipartisan common-sense reform that gave families a few simple protections. It cut down on denials due to preexisting conditions, it helped people get individual coverage when they lost group or COBRA coverage, it began chipping away at job lock, where fear of losing health insurance keeps people from changing jobs.

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But the House Republican leadership is turning straightforward reform into a goodie bag for a privileged few. Medical savings accounts, a payoff to a fat cat contributor to the majority. Limits on malpractice awards to people whose lives and dreams have been ruined.

The Republican leadership has demonstrated once again they just do not care about average working people. We should pass the Kennedy-Kassebaum-Roukema bill and not a special interest spinoff. It is the very least we can do.

#### CHANGE THE RULES ON OIL

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it has been 5 years since the gulf war, and we have done nothing to end our dependence on oil, foreign oil.

Today the United States imports more than 50 percent of its oil from foreign countries, not because we want to, but because our laws have forced us to. When we mandate that all companies have to get 1,000 permits and regulations to drill just one well, anytime we increase the regulatory cost by \$37 billion, when we close off their access to

oil-rich land and when we support a destructive tax code that contains provisions like the alternative minimum tax, we are just asking for lost jobs and foreign dependence.

Is it any wonder our oil companies have lost over 500,000 jobs since 1972, closed half of their refineries and moved to Vietnam, China, and Russia?

Mr. Speaker, we must change the rules to allow our oil industry to flourish, create jobs and provide a strong and secure America for us and our children.

#### HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mrs. KENNELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, today we have a choice. We can take a simple, single step to ensure people who can change their jobs or lose their jobs that they can take their health insurance with them. Or we can let this simple, necessary piece of legislation get totally complicated in a maze of complications.

It cannot be said too often. Everybody agrees that individuals who change their job should be able to take their health insurance with them. People who are in a job should not be locked in that job because they are afraid they will lose their health insurance. The President agrees. He said, I will sign Kennedy-Kassebaum, it is a good first beginning in health care reform. The other body agrees. They have passed a bipartisan piece of legislation. The House Democrats agree. We will offer a substitute today that contains the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill. It is a clean, a good bill. Even some House Republicans agree. The substitute that we will introduce today was introduced originally by a Republican.

Mr. Speaker, there is one problem. Some people are not satisfied with fixing this problem. They want to add 10 new provisions in health care reform, 10 new insurance provisions that are too complicated. Pass the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill, begin health care reform.

#### NOT IF BUT WHEN

(Mr. ISTOOK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ISTOOK. Mr. Speaker, no nation can be secure if it depends on another nation for its economic lifeblood. Five years ago, we sent 500,000 American troops to the Persian Gulf to fight for oil. In 1991 we imported 45 percent of our oil. Today, we import 52 percent, 9 million barrels per day, annually \$60 billion going out of the country to buy oil.

The number of producing wells in this country has declined by 11 percent since the gulf war. Instead of becoming less dependent on foreign oil, we are

more so. No nation can be secure with such dependency, and because 60 percent of America's oil wells, 60 percent, Mr. Speaker, are developed not by major oil companies but by independent producers, it is in America's national interest to do all that we can to preserve America's independent producers of petroleum.

#### HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the house for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, today we have a golden opportunity to pass health care reform which, in fact, will be a first step to improving the lives of hard-working Americans. People that I hear from every day in my community say to me they are scared to death that, if they change their jobs, they will lose their health care or, if they or their children have had an illness which they have managed to survive, that in fact insurance companies will deny them insurance because of a pre-existing condition.

The piece of legislation that we talk about today, a bipartisan piece of legislation, can help begin to change that fact in the lives of working families today. What is stopping this event? The Republican leadership has decided to load this up with special goodies for their special interests.

Mr. Speaker, let me just quote the Washington Times. Do not take my word for it. The Washington Times, not a liberal newspaper, says that riders imperil health reforms. That is what this is about.

My Republican colleague of the Committee on Commerce, Mr. BLILEY, the chairman, said yesterday, and I quote, "The more you load the wagon, the heavier it is to move."

Do not let them pass this bill with these riders. It will end health care for working families in this country.

#### THE LINE-ITEM VETO

(Mr. SOLOMON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, today is perhaps the most exciting day in my 18-year career here in this Congress, as it is for another former President, President Ronald Reagan. President Reagan, I hope you are listening. You said in your book entitled *Autobiography* by Ronald Reagan, on American life with the following paragraphs, you said: And yet, as I reflected on what we had accomplished, I had a sense of incompleteness, that there was still work to be done.

We need a constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget, said Ronald Reagan. He went on to say: And the President needs a line-item veto to cut out unnecessary spending.